

The Characteristics of a Good Language Learner

Good language learners are actively involved in the language learning process.

They take responsibility for their own learning. Besides regular language classes, they create opportunities to use the language. They know practice is very important. They are willing to take risks, to appear foolish if necessary.

Good language learners try to figure out how the language works.

They try to come to grips with the language as a system. They pay attention to form and look for patterns. They develop good techniques for improving their pronunciation, learning grammar and vocabulary. They welcome mistakes as a way of learning more about the language.

Good language learners know that language is used to communicate.

They pay attention to meaning. They have good techniques to practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In the early stages of their language learning they do not worry about making mistakes. They are risk takers. They speak and try to become fluent.

Good language learners are like good detectives.

They are always looking for clues that will help them understand how the language works. They make guesses and ask people to correct them if they are wrong. They compare what they say with what others say. They keep a record of what they have learned and think about it. They learn they monitor themselves.

Good language learners learn to think in the language.

Good language learners realize that language learning is not easy.

They try to overcome their feelings of frustration and their lack of confidence. They are able to come to terms with the affective demands of language learning, ie they can manage their emotions. They are realistic in their setting of study goals.

Good language learners have a long-term commitment to language learning. They are realistic in realizing that it takes time and practice.

Good language learners are also good culture learners aware of the very close relationship between language and culture.

Questionnaire for a good language learner

Below is a very simple questionnaire to help you think about what you do as a learner. Circle the answer that describes how you approach language learning.

A: always O: often S: sometimes R: rarely N: never

Good language learners are actively involved in the language learning process

3. Besides language class, I plan A activities that give me a chance to use and learn the language.

4. I choose activities because I am A already familiar with the ideas.

5. I can figure out my special A problems.

6. I try to do something about my A special problems.

7. I do things I don't usually do to gain A more information about my foreign language.

O S R N

O S R N O S R N O S R N O S R N

Good language learners try to figure out how the language works.

8. I pay special attention to A pronunciation.

9. I pay special attention to grammar. A 10. I pay special attention to vocabulary. A

O S R N

O S R N O S R N

Good language learners know that language is used to communicate

11. I try to develop good techniques to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing.

12. I try to develop good techniques to improve my pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary.

A A

O S R N O S R N

Part 2 - C Characteristics of good learners

- 2 -

Good language learners are like good detectives

13. I am like a detective. I look for clues A O that will help me understand how language works.

14. When I don't know, I guess. A O 15. I ask people to correct me if I make A O a mistake.

16. I compare what I say with what A O others say to see if I'm using correct language.

17. I think about what I've learned. A O

Good language learners learn to think in the language

18. I try to think in my target language. A O S

Good language learners try to overcome their feelings of frustration and lack of confidence

19. I overcome my feelings of frustration A O S R N and lack of confidence.

20. I can laugh at my mistakes. A O S R N